

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

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U.S. APPLICATION NO. (IF KNOWN, SEE 37 CFR

10/049963

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
PCT/US00/23454INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
25 August 2000PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
27 August 1999

TITLE OF INVENTION

An Enhanced System for the Creation of Custom Designed Direct Mail Advertising and Designation of Recipients
Thereof Via the Internet Providing for User Supplied Templates

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

KARGMAN, James B.

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)). The submission must include items (5), (6), (9) and (24) indicated below.
4. ☒ The US has been elected by the expiration of 19 months from the priority date (Article 31).
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371 (c) (2))
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☒ has been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☒ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☐ An English language translation of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto.
 - b. ☐ has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
7. ☒ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☒ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ An English language translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(4)).
10. ☐ An English language translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(5)).
11. ☒ A copy of the International Preliminary Examination Report (PCT/IPEA/409).
12. ☒ A copy of the International Search Report (PCT/ISA/210).

Items 13 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:

13. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
14. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
15. ☐ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
16. ☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
17. ☐ A substitute specification.
18. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
19. ☐ A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821 - 1.825.
20. ☐ A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
21. ☐ A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
22. ☒ Certificate of Mailing by Express Mail
23. ☒ Other items or information:
acknowledgment postcard

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (IF KNOWN, SEE 37 CFR 1.101) <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">10/049963</div>	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. <div style="font-weight: bold;">PCT/US00/23454</div>	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER <div style="font-weight: bold;">991131</div>
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24. The following fees are submitted: BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)) : <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$1040.00 <input type="checkbox"/> International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$890.00 <input type="checkbox"/> International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$740.00 <input type="checkbox"/> International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$710.00 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$100.00 </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;"> ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT = <div style="float: right; font-weight: bold;">\$100.00</div> </div>	CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
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Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492 (e)).				\$0.00	
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CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE		
Total claims	11 - 20 =	0	x \$18.00	\$0.00	
Independent claims	1 - 3 =	0	x \$84.00	\$0.00	
Multiple Dependent Claims (check if applicable) . <input type="checkbox"/>				\$0.00	
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				\$100.00	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27). The fees indicated above are reduced by 1/2.				\$50.00	
SUBTOTAL =				\$50.00	
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492 (f))				\$0.00	
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =				\$50.00	
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31) (check if applicable). <input type="checkbox"/>				\$0.00	
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =				\$50.00	
				Amount to be refunded	\$
				charged	\$

a. ☒ A check in the amount of **\$50.00** to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. _____ in the amount of _____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. **04-1030** A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

d. ☐ Fees are to be charged to a credit card. **WARNING:** Information on this form may become public. Credit card information should not be included on this form. Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

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NAME

32492

REGISTRATION NUMBER

Feb 19, 2002

DATE

**An Enhanced System for the Creation of Custom Designed
Direct Mail Advertising and Designation of Recipients Thereof Via the
Internet
Providing for User Supplied Templates**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. The Technical Field.

The present invention relates generally to the design, printing and mailing of direct mail pieces to actual and or potential customers for the products or services being offered by a business. In particular the present invention relates to an automated system through which a user can design a direct mail piece, identify those who are to receive the piece and command the printing and mailing of the pieces all over the Internet without the need to individually contact and meet separately with a graphic artist, a copy editor, an address list vendor, a printer, or a mail house.

2. Background

Specifically disclosed herein is a system for permitting a user to custom design a direct mail advertising piece and select intended recipients using the Internet, towards executing a highly effective, focused and accountable direct mail advertising campaign targeting a specific audience, thereby maximizing the use of advertising dollars.

The present system does away with the need to spend time and money retaining separate graphic artists, copyrighters, computer technicians, printers and address list vendors and provides a one stop solution to creating, customizing, printing and mailing high quality customized direct mail advertising

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pieces. The present system provides for the design of both graphic and textual matter included on the direct mail piece, the generation of a targeted mailing list, the determination of the actual cost for executing the direct mail piece prior to confirming the order, the printing of the direct mail piece, and facilitates the mailing of same to the intended recipients.

In the prior art, to prepare, produce and distribute a direct mail piece, a business owner typically has to spend significant time and effort to design both the appearance as well as the textual content which would appear on the printed advertisement to be mailed to addressed recipients. A direct mail piece typically comprises a single two sided unfolded card having a dimension nominally equal to 8 by 6 inches. One face of the piece typically contains an advertisement, promotion or the like being offered by the business while the other side, in addition to containing further promotional information, contains the address to whom the direct mail piece is to be delivered via the postal service.

The prior art process of producing a direct mail piece typically begins with designing exactly what is going to appear on each face of the piece. Significant time and effort is required by the business to not only create the actual message which is going to be delivered but more importantly to lay out the message in an appealing format on the face of the card so as to have a professional appearance which would attract actual and potential customers to the business. Great effort is typically required to create a promotion piece which distinguishes itself from other mass mail pieces which are typically received by through the mail. Accordingly, graphic artists are often retained at great expense to create attractive artwork to

more sophisticated manner, a great deal of effort is required - - an effort which is typically unsuccessful given the manner in which the data is maintained by the business. For example, a business that delivers product directly to the consumer, such as a pizza restaurant, may very well wish to target its promotion in a very narrow geographic region, moving from region to region with each successive promotion so that the business' delivery people are not required to drive crisis-cross all over town, but rather, can concentrate their delivery efforts in fulfilling orders being generated from a particular neighborhood or consolidated region. While a Zip code defines a single geographic region, a mailing targeted to a single geographic area defined by a single Zip code is typically ineffective since that region often encompasses too many addresses and thus not an efficient or acceptable mechanism for designating addressees of a direct mail piece.

A business may wish to distribute a direct mail piece to recipients in a uniform manner which would results in mailings being generated to only a portion of the individuals residing within a given Zip code range. For the business to effectively execute such a promotional program it is necessary to not only identify to whom within each zip code direct mail pieces have been mailed, but more importantly, to identify and track those to whom a piece has not been mailed so that successive mailings may target those individuals. Obviously the time and effort required to execute such a sophisticated program may well be beyond the means or skills of a typical small business whose resources may be otherwise required to address the on going basic operation of the business and are not available for customized promotional campaigns.

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Additionally, after the direct mail pieces have been printed, and after they have been addressed (either by the printer or by the business itself using either direct printing methods or paste-on labels) the pieces must be bundled for the delivery to the postal service for delivery to the recipients. Discounts are available from the postal service based upon the degree to which the direct mail pieces have been previously sorted, with the best rate often available only by sorting mail by carrier route or the like. Again, the manner in which a typical small business maintains its address database typically does not lend itself to automatic sorting and instead requires that manual sorting, which is often not feasible.

The present invention seeks to address each of the foregoing short comings and disadvantages and offer further benefits to both small and large businesses alike who wish to design, address, print and mail customized direct mail pieces.

Accordingly it is an object of the present invention to permit the user to create and address and to control and command the printing and distribution of direct mail pieces, via a system accessed over the Internet.

It is another object of the present invention to obviate the need to seek out the services of multiple third parties to create, address, print and distribute a direct mail piece.

A further object of the present invention is to provide the user with a head start in creating a direct mail piece by offering the user the ability to choose from among pre-designed elements of artwork which may be selected for printing on the direct mail piece.

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Yet another object of the present invention is to provide the user access to preexisting templates which serve to format the textual graphic content composed by the user for printing on the direct mail piece and to permit the user to save completed templates for reuse.

It is yet another object of the present invention to permit a user to up-load and use its own existing templates for printing on the direct mail piece and further to permit the user to up-load logo's and the like for inclusion on the direct mail piece.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide for the creation of a direct mail piece which contains a coupon redeemable by the recipient as well as a textual explanation of the offer or other promotional content relating to the business.

It is yet another object of the present invention to permit a user to up-load and use its own coupons for printing on the direct mail piece.

Another object of the present invention is to provide the user with the ability to access pre-existing address databases and/or use the business' own mailing lists to select recipients of the direct mail piece.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide the user with the ability to select recipients of the direct mail piece by absolute location, by geographic proximity to the user's business, by demographic profile, or by randomly selected subsets within a category on a rotating periodic basis.

A further object of the present invention is to provide for the printing and sorting of the direct mail piece in a manner which minimizes postage costs.

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Another object of the present invention to provide multiple security layers which permit overall control of the use of the system preventing unauthorized individuals from using the system and incurring expenses and otherwise restrict the addressing of direct mail pieces to preclude conflicts such as among business locations with defined services areas.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a system which that uses an essential core of hardware and software components to permit the system to permit multiple users to access and use the system wherein each user perceives that they are using a custom designed system specifically tailored for them and no one else.

These and other objects of the present invention will become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art in light of the present specifications, drawings and claims.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention discloses a method for creating a custom designed direct mail advertisement and designating recipients thereof via the Internet. The method begins with the step of logging on to a web site via the Internet. Once logged in the user selects from among one or more pre-defined designs a design for the front side of a direct mail advertisement. The user then selects from among one or more predefined templates a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement. The text that appears on the back side of a direct mail advertisement is then specified. In one embodiment the step of specifying the text that appears on the back side of a direct mail advertisement includes the step of uploading user supplied artwork and logos for inclusion on the back side of the direct mail advertisement. Next one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement are specified. The list of recipients for the direct mail advertisement corresponding to the specified criteria is then compiled. Thereafter, data files comprising the design of the front and back sides of the direct mail advertisement and the list of recipients are electronically transmitted toward printing pre-addressed individual copies of the custom designed direct mail advertisement for subsequent mailing to the intended recipients thereof.

One embodiment of the invention further includes the step of selecting a theme for the direct mail piece from one or more themes with each theme having

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associated therewith one or more pre-defined designs for the front side of the direct mail advertisement.

The step of specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement may comprise the step of entering the name and addresses for each intended recipient of the direct mail piece. Alternatively, the step of specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement may comprise the step of specifying a starting address and a distance therefrom toward identifying the intended recipients of the direct mail piece. Still further the step of specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement further comprises the step of searching a database corresponding to names and addresses using the specified criteria toward identifying the name and address for each intended recipient of the direct mail piece.

The step of specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement may include the step of entering one or more demographic criteria associated with the names and addresses maintained by a database toward identifying intended recipients of the direct mail piece while the step of specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement may comprise the step of transferring a pre-existing database list of names and addresses for the intended recipients of the direct mail piece.

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The invention further includes the step of presenting to the user the total maximum cost for placing an order for the production and mailing of the direct mail pieces prior to the user confirming the order.

In one embodiment the method for creating a custom designed direct mail advertisement and designating recipients thereof via the Internet comprises the steps of: logging on to a web site via the Internet; selecting from among one or more pre-defined designs a design for the front side of a direct mail advertisement; selecting from among one or more predefined templates a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement; specifying the text that appears on the back side of a direct mail advertisement; specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement; compiling the list of recipients for the direct mail advertisement corresponding to the specified criteria by searching a database for names and addresses that match the specified criteria; and transmitting the design of the front and back sides of the direct mail advertisement and the list of intended recipients of same toward for printing pre-addressed individual copies of the designed direct mail advertisement for subsequent mailing to the intended recipients thereof.

In one embodiment the step of selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement comprises the step of selecting from among one or more predefined templates. In another the step of selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement comprises the step of selecting from among one or more templates uploaded by the user.

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The invention may further include the step of saving the completed template appearing on the back side of the direct mail piece such that the step of selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement may in one embodiment comprise the step of selecting from among one or more previously saved templates.

As an additional security measure the step of logging onto a web site via the internet may further include the step of identifying the user's profile and security rights toward filtering the list of recipients for the direct mail advertisement, identifying the URL used by the user and providing to the user a web site having a visual appearance, content and user selectable options and which are determined by which URL the user used to log on to the web site.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 of the drawings illustrates one face of a direct mail piece created using the present Invention specifically illustrating the artwork relating to the theme selected by the user;

Fig. 2 of the drawings illustrates the other face of a direct mail piece created using the present invention specifically illustrating a template completed by the user toward conveying an advertisement and offer to the recipient;

Figs. 3a and 3b of the drawings are a flowchart of the process by which a user creates and addresses and controls the printing and distribution of a direct mail piece via the Internet according to the present invention;

Fig. 4 of the drawings illustrates the text boxes containing sample text providing suggested language for the direct mail piece;

Fig. 5 of the drawings illustrates the completed second face of the direct mail piece presented to the user for approval;

Fig. 6 of the drawings illustrates the input screen presented by the system to the user for specifying the demographic criteria to be used to identify intended recipients of the direct mail piece;

Fig. 7 of the drawings illustrates the input screen presented by the system to the user for selecting recipients of the direct mail piece using a map and grid; and

Fig. 8 of the drawings is a flowchart of the process by which a user is presented with a system having an appearance, content and available options determined by which URL the user used to enter the system.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

While this invention is susceptible to embodiment in many different forms, there are shown in the drawings and will be described in detail herein several specific embodiments. The present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principle of the invention intended merely to explain and illustrate the invention, and is not intended to limit the invention in any way to embodiments illustrated.

Rather than having to individually seek out each of the different third parties whose skills are necessary to create, produce, address and distribute a direct mail piece, the present invention provides the user with a one stop shop, via the Internet or other computer network, to implement and execute a direct mail campaign. For purposes of the present disclosure a direct mail piece for a pizzeria is illustrated with the understanding that the present invention is suitable for use by virtually any business.

Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawings illustrate the two sides of a sample direct mail piece 10 created using the present invention. The sample illustrated is shown as having been created and tailored using the present invention specifically for a pizzeria business. Fig.1 of the drawings illustrates one side 11 of a sample direct mail piece 10. In the example illustrated face 11 is shown as containing artwork 15 which includes a text component 14 at the lower half of the card and an graphic component 13 on the upper half of the card. As explained further herein, side 11 may be configured to present different artwork as selected

by the user. The recipient of this direct mail piece readily sees that an advertisement or offer relating somehow to pizza is being presented.

Fig. 2 of the drawings illustrates the opposing side 12 of the sample direct mail piece 10. On side 12 the name, address and phone number of the business sending the direct mail piece appears in region 16. The name and address of the intended recipient of the direct mail piece appears in region 18 and is positioned so as to facilitate its recognition and delivery by the postal service. A text message appears in region 17 and a coupon in region 19. The text message typically conveys to the recipient additional information about the business or the promotion being advertised. For example, the message may further elaborate on the nature of an ongoing sale or give further detail regarding the coupon appearing in region 19. As disclosed herein, the composition of side 12 may be selected and configured by the user via the Internet and the actual text messages, including particulars relating to the offer and coupon are determined by the user with the system assisting in the formatting of same. In another embodiment of the invention, in lieu of using the system's predefined templates the user may upload its own templates or portions thereof, such as a logo as illustrated for placement in region 16 or a custom coupon for region 19. The artwork 15 appearing on side 11 of the direct mail piece 10 and the text appearing on side 12 are thus each selected by the user using the present system.

Figs 3a and 3b of the drawings illustrate the steps of the method disclosed by the present invention. The underlying software programming details

implementing the present invention, including the formats and techniques for uploading user supplied data and content, are known to those of ordinary skill in the art, and include such techniques and languages as HTML and Java programming, and do not specifically comprise a part of the present invention.

The creation of a direct mail piece begins with the user accessing a web site associated with the presently disclosed system via the internet. Access is accomplished by logging on to the on-line system, step 100. For purposes of this disclosure the web site is referred to as ZIPM.COM which the user may access via the Internet using a web browser program running on a personal computer. Using the present system a small and or large business may design all facets of a direct mail piece from a computer desktop.

Upon accessing the ZIPM.COM web site the user first identifies him or herself to the system by logging in using a pre-assigned login name and password. First time users may be directed to a registration page to enter their name, address and billing information, including credit card data, after which a login name and password are selected and/or assigned. Alternatively, and so as not to deter potential users from reviewing the benefit of the system, the user's login and password may be solicited just prior to confirming an order for the production and mailing of a direct mail piece rather, than at login, so that the user may be induced to view the system and experience the ease of use, power and utility provided thereby without having to register first. On each login the user may have the opportunity to change billing or personal details.

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The present invention provides a security layer which controls access to the Internet application and provides an administrative structure which not only restricts logins and thus prevents unauthorized use of the system, but also includes administrative features which permit one or more individuals to generate direct mail pieces for multiple business locations. In operation a business owner, or an employee with sufficient rights, may prepare direct mail pieces for multiple locations, such as for example as may be used by an individual one who owns several food franchises in a region but does not want each store manager to create direct mail pieces which either extend beyond a desired territory or otherwise incur expenses that the owner may not want.

For example, one individual may own ten pizza delivery locations scattered about a given geographic region. The owner of these businesses may in turn have five managers who are responsible for overseeing the operation of two locations each. The present system can be configured such that only a supervisory manager or the owner has the right to generate direct mail pieces, the cost of which is ultimately borne by the business owner. The security system also serves to restrict access to the system as well as the address capabilities of the system in a manner which prevents one manager from encroaching upon another manager's business territory where, for example two businesses may be located relatively close to one another but have distinct delivery boundaries established by the owner. For example, the system can be configured in the above example to preclude one store manager from addressing direct mail

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pieces to locations which are outside of that store's assigned service or delivery area.

After logging in, the system prompts the user to select a theme for the direct mail piece from among one of several predefined themes, step 110. Each theme page serves to provide the user with a head start in creating a direct mail piece by offering the user the ability to choose from among many pre-designed elements of artwork which may be selected for printing on one-side of the direct mail piece, step 120. Themes are divided into different categories and classifications to permit the user to identify one most suitable for his or her needs, business or customer base. Themes may include general topics such as GENERAL, HOLIDAY, SALE and PIZZA, where each theme has multiple choices for cover art associated therewith. Once the theme is chosen the user can choose from among several variations on that theme, step 120. The artwork provided to the user comprises high quality graphic designs which have a professional appearance when printed. For example, the PIZZA theme may have five different samples of artwork from which the user may choose. In the example illustrated, a PIZZA theme has been selected and relatively simple artwork chosen. Of course, much more elaborate artwork and themes are possible.

The intent is to offer the business universally appealing concepts toward attracting new and repeat customers to the business. Any business can use any of the themes to prompt interest in a prospect receiving the direct mail piece to turn the card over and read the message and/or offer appearing on the other side. For example, a local pizza parlor that wishes to generate a direct mail piece

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advertising a special promotion can select pre-designed artwork in four color fashion illustrating, for example, a warm pizza being pulled from an oven - - all without having to create the piece or identify the artwork and obtain clearance of rights to use same. Once selected, the user may preview the artwork, step 130, and view an enlarged image on -screen. Once approved, step 140, the user proceeds to the step of preparing the offer. If the user does not approve the artwork selected, the user may return to step 110 and select another theme or artwork.

After approving the artwork for the first side of the offer, the user begins to prepare an offer by choosing from among three options, step 150. The user may select a predefined template for the second side of the direct mail piece, step 151. Templates in the present invention comprise pre-defined graphic layouts of offers that are used to present an offer or concept to prospective customers or clients of the business. The system can have a virtually unlimited number of templates available for the user to select from. This template is a pre-designed layout complete with font sizes and organizations all predefined. All the user has to do is select the template layout that he or she prefers and then enter the text into the template text entry regions provided on-screen. Templates may present varying styles, such as contemporary, traditional, classic etc. which may be selected. For example, a furniture store specializing in country designs might prefer a traditional layout and font style while a hair salon may prefer a contemporary font style.

In one embodiment of the present invention the user is presented with blank text boxes in which user composed text is entered. In another embodiment illustrated in Fig. 4 the user is presented with text boxes containing sample text consistent with the theme selected that helps suggest proper wording of an offer. In each case, the user enters text of his or her choosing, step 160. The system automatically sizes the text boxes to guide the user on how many characters are possible on each line, reflecting the actual font size used on the actual direct mail piece thus doing away with the need for graphic artists and designers. The predefined limits imposed by the system ensure that a pleasant attractive looking direct mail piece will be produced. The provision of suggested wording eliminates the need to retain copywriters to create the text message. The user enters his or her special text or offer after which the system will process the text into an actual display of what the direct mail piece will look like when received by the recipient. The user may edit the text, step 170 and when complete may preview a proof copy of the piece, step 180, illustrated in Fig. 5.. The user may approve the text, step 190 or elect to change the text entry by returning to step 150 to select another template. Alternatively the user may return to step 170 and resume editing the text prior to confirm it for printing. The system thus automatically converts the user entered text into a properly formatted direct mail piece.

The user may select to upload its own template, step 152. To further assist the user, the present system offers the user the ability to compose their own template off-line and upload that template to the system for use on its direct mail pieces as well as to upload their own business logos, designs and the like for

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inclusion on the direct mail piece using the desktop publishing features of the present system for inclusion in a predefined template, step 154. The use of enhanced library templates gives the user the ability to create additional features on the direct mail piece such as including "coupons" and not mere textual advertising and images. In this manner, the user is not restricted to the pre-formatted templates, and may instead, use and configure more flexible templates to include additional information.

Alternatively, the user may recall a previously created template, step 153, which was saved and named by the user, steps 192 and 193, thereby obviating the need to recreate the template during subsequent direct mail promotion campaigns.

After preparing and approving the direct mail piece, the user is given the opportunity to select an address source, step 200 from which the user will identify and select the recipients who shall receive the direct mail piece. The user is given three options for selecting an address source.

As one option, step 220, the system permits the user to enter a mailing list of his or her own, addressee by addressee, on-line, step 260. This is useful for a business which may have a mailing list which is not maintained in an electronic format. The user entered list is subsequently maintained by the system for later use by the business. The user may additionally later add, change or delete entries in the mailing list.

As a second option, step 230, the user may upload an existing list maintained by the user in an electronic form, step 240. The system provides

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tools and utilities to accept the user's format and make it useable by the system. Businesses who have their own mailing lists can transfer them directly to the system by uploading to the ZIPM.COM site. Once the file has been uploaded the business specifies how their file is laid out, step 250. Files can be organized in a number of ways. For example by Name, Address, City, Zip; or by Phone, Address, Name, Zip. The system provides a tool to display to the user the characteristics of the business' uploaded mailing list file so that the user can then identify to the system which of those characteristics correspond with the mailing label characteristics. It is a simple matter of defining for the system a correlation between field locations in the file and positions on the mailing piece. In this manner, the direct mail pieces are properly addressed for postal delivery without having to process and reorganize the entire uploaded database. Moreover, when a user uploads a file, the cost of the mailing can be based on the quantity of addresses uploaded. Since some addresses might be invalid, the quotation may be given as a maximum amount which might be charged to the user's credit card were an order to be confirmed, step 400. If upon login the user's profile indicated a appropriate restriction, the system will filter the address list according to the user's profile, step 251.

As a third option, step 210, the user may access one or more databases maintained by the system using search tools presented on-screen to the user as the address source. This third option presents to the user a powerful tool for addressing the short comings typically associated with a business's own preexisting database. The user is provided the ability to skillfully and accurately

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identify specific targeted individuals or entities to whom the direct mail piece should be delivered. The databases accessible to the user contain not only name and addresses but also demographic data corresponding to each name in the database. Commercially available databases may be remotely accessed by the system or internalized into the system toward permitting the user to select addressees for the direct mail piece.

The demographic database may be accessed based upon pure geographic factors, step 270. To compose a mailing list based upon geographic factors, the user is first presented with the choice of using a map and grid, step 280. If selected, the user views a map with a centroid based on an actual street address or zip code provided by the business as a central point of their service or trade boundaries, step 290. The map shown includes a grid overlay which provides a convenient method of selecting targeted quadrants for pinpoint marketing by the business. The user may select one or more grids from the displayed map by checking a list of grid numbers using a mouse, step 300. If upon login the user's profile indicated a appropriate restriction, the system will filter the identified matches to exclude addresses according to the user's profile, step 301. The system will then present the user with the total the number addresses within the grids selected for the users approval, step 310. If rejected, the user returns to the map and grid to re-select the grids until an acceptable quantity of addresses is obtained. Once approved, the user is presented with a calculation of the total maximum cost which would be incurred if the order is

confirmed, step 400. Different offers can be sent to different groups within these differing boundaries by simply creating another offer and target mailing list.

Alternatively, the user is provided the option of searching for addresses which are a specified distance from a given location toward selecting addresses to which the direct mail piece is to be mailed, step 320. The user enters a starting location, step 330 which may be the user's business address, or alternatively may be another address, such as where a pizzeria desires to mail to all addresses within 1 mile of the center of a college campus and where the business is not necessarily located on-campus. The user enters the distance from the location, step 340. If upon login the user's profile indicated a appropriate restriction, the system will filter the identified matches to exclude addresses according to the user's profile, step 341. For example, if the user's profile indicates that he or she is a manager who is permitted to generate mailings only to a specific Zip code or other territory or definable parameter, the system will filter all the matched addresses and exclude those that lie outside the permitted Zip code range or otherwise do not meet the defined parameter(s). The user is then asked to approve the total quantity of addresses within the specified range, step 350. If not approved the system returns to step 330. Once approved, the user is presented with a calculation of the total maximum cost which would be incurred if the order is confirmed, step 400.

In addition to mere proximity, the business may configure a list based upon state, county, zip or other codes.

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However, a more sophisticated manner for selecting addresses is available using the demographic data maintained and/or accessible by the system as an address source. This aspect of the system is useful where for example, the user wishes to select not only individuals within ten miles from the business's address, but also only apartments and not single family homes.

The user may thus access the on-line demographic database, step 360. The user will be presented with various choices corresponding to the different demographic criteria maintained by the system as illustrated in Fig. 6. The user may select one or more of the variables and identify the particular demographic characteristics to be used in searching the database toward selecting addressees for the direct mail piece, step 370. Once identified the system will search the database for matches, step 380. If upon login the user's profile indicated a appropriate restriction, the system will filter the identified matches to exclude addresses according to the user's profile, step 381, as discussed herein. The user will then be asked to approve the total quantity of addresses returned, step 390. If not approved the system returns to step 370. Once approved, the user is presented with a calculation of the total maximum cost which would be incurred if the order is confirmed, step 400.

A number of demographic options may be made available to the user, so as to permit the user to select addressees by income, by children in the family and the like. Through this manner, for example, a business selling baby products, may, if so desired, exclude from the list of potential recipients, addresses of single person households, or alternatively may target only those families with

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children. The user may select an affinity list such as a list of people who subscribe to a certain magazine. The user may create an address list using demographic data maintained by the system.

For example, a pizzeria may decide to offer a special on gourmet pizzas and accordingly may wish to target a certain group of potential customers. The business may target people who are most likely to order gourmet pizzas and to that end the business may define a mailing list comprised of people who subscribe to cooking magazines. To accomplish the same end the business may use the demographic data criteria to select households in certain income ranges, or without children on the assumption that children do not like such pizzas. The business may further wish to define a mailing list comprised of addresses within a certain neighborhood who are believed most likely to order such goods. The demographic choices may include such factors as income, size of family, ownership of cars, homes, likes, dislikes and other data within the system database.

Each of the foregoing alternatives generate a user defined mailing list by accessing databases and the results may be maintained by the system for later use in connection with another mailing.

Once a mailing list has been defined, the user may be given the option to execute a rolling mailing campaign whereby the system will, for example, randomly select one thousand addresses within address list and generate direct mail pieces addressed to those addresses for mailing during a first mailing. The system may further generate additional randomly selected groups of one

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thousand addresses from within the address list for mailing during subsequent periods of time until such time as all of the addresses within the address list have been selected - - all without duplication.

Once the direct mail piece has been composed, once the address list has been selected, and once the user has approved the total maximum cost for the mailing, step 410, the user is prompted to specify a mailer dispatch date, step 420. The dispatch date is the date upon which the printed direct mail pieces will be delivered to the post office for mailing. At that point the user is asked to confirm the order, step 430 after which the user exits the system having created, addressed and dispatched a direct mail piece entirely on-line via the Internet.

An additional feature of the present invention is designed for franchised operations operating with designated delivery zones whereby a latitude/longitude enabled delivery boundary may be used to prohibit one franchise location from sending direct mail pieces and thus soliciting the business of a neighboring franchise operation whose intended to operate outside of the delivery boundaries. Upon login if the user's profile indicated a appropriate restriction, the system will filter the identified matches to exclude addresses according to the user's profile prior to the user approving the address list. Repeat ordering is also enabled whereby the system automatically sweeps through a zone or boundary which may, for example, include twelve thousand address but sweeps through three thousand addresses at a time. Accordingly, automated repeat mailings may be generated such that the user is able to cover all of the addresses within a given boundary over time. A further aspect of this feature is the ability to cause the

system to randomly select addresses within the boundary such that a more generalized coverage of the boundary is accomplished with each mailing as opposed to proceeding through a given geographical boundary, for example, one street at a time.

The present system will then automatically cause the direct mail pieces to be printed at a printer located proximate the system or at remotely located printer. The system prints the direct mail pieces in a pre-sorted fashion in order to take advantage of the lowest available mailing rates offered by the postal service. The direct mail pieces are then forwarded by the proprietor of the system to the postal service for delivery to the recipient.

In view of the on-line computerized designing, addressing, printing and mailing of direct mail pieces, the user has access to an order list as well as deadline lists such that orders may be placed up to the very last minute in order to achieve the desired delivery dates – as may be desirable for a business who wishes to target college students who may be in town on vacation. Not only may orders be placed up to the very last minute to meet a given delivery date, but orders may also be recalled and or modified up to the point at which they are released for production - - without requiring the user to interact with creators, copyrighters, printers, mail houses and the like.

Fig. 7 of the drawings illustrates the input screen used to select addresses to which the direct mail piece is to be mailed using the map and grid overlay option. Map 600 is shown comprising a region defined by a starting address provided by the user as well as a specified distance from that address. Grid 610

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is shown overlying map 600. Grid 610 is composed of 16 separate cells 620 each having a cell member 630. Table 40 lists each of the sixteen cell numbers 620 and the number of addresses 650 identified by the system as contained within each cell. The user may select one or more grids 620 by checking boxes 660 associated with each grid number using a mouse. The user may include or exclude a particular grid in the address range and thereby include or exclude the associated addresses such that the total number of addresses shown as 670 may be modified.

An additional feature of the present invention is inherent in its overall design. A central core group of software modules handle all of the user interface and database engine functions of the present system. This central group of software modules controls all security, all access and all accounting and billing activities associated with the system. One distinct advantage of the present design is that the same software system running on a single server may possess multiple identities. Specifically, a user who accesses the system through one web address or universal resource locator, "URL", may be presented with a one user interface and, for example, a direct mail order system that has a relatively simple and basic appearance offered under a given specific service mark or company identity. On the other hand, another user who accesses the system using a different web site or URL may see an entirely different system. For example that system may offer that user many more enhanced features, and options and choices towards generating more complex and sophisticated direct mail pieces such as by offering enhanced design or addressing options. Such a system is

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virtually infinitely configurable and yet does not require complete rewriting to offer a different system to different providers. As illustrated in Fig. 8, the user logs into the on-line system, step 100. The system then determines which URL the user used to enter the system, step 101. Based upon which URL the user used, a particular appearance, particular content and specific options are presented to the user, step 102.

For example, in one situation, the present system may be offered to a small advertising agency who has a clientele composed of relatively small businesses who need access to a system but who are not computer sophisticated and who do not need very elaborate resources. The advertising agency may pay the proprietor of the system a small fee for being able to offer this value added service to its clientele. On the other hand, the proprietor of this system may offer the system to a large corporation having hundreds of locations who may utilize the system for generating mailings all across the country. Since the same core software operates the system, the proprietor of the system need only add the new artwork and/or configure the system to either include or exclude various system options and configure the security arrangements which control the system.

The ability to utilize the same software and hardware infrastructure, e.g., the same software modules and server and printing facilities thus provides direct mail configuration, printing and mailing services to, and on behalf of, multiple entities in a manner in which one user creates direct mail pieces and sees what appears to be a custom designed Internet site and where another user, using another

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“provider’s service” utilizes the very same software and hardware and yet sees a what appears to be a “web site” customized for that provider having a different identity.

In operation this multiple identity feature begins with the login process or call to a designated web site or URL. The login or URL determines the entry point to the system and once detected by the system software causes the software to select and display the appropriate artwork and other aspects of the system which are appropriate to and customized for that particular entry point.

By way of example, the present system could be offered for a local newspaper who, in turn, resells the system access to its advertising customers making it accessible via the newspaper’s web site, such as a domain name “newspaper.com”. Through this site the newspaper could sell this direct mail advertising service and permit its users to design, configure, address, print and mail direct mail pieces using the newspaper’s site. The users of this site would see the newspaper’s own logo and other specific artwork applicable to the newspaper on the web site pages. Another user may enter the very same system through a different entry point that may, for example, be offered by an advertising agency. The login or URL used would identify the user as a customer of the advertising agency, and not the newspaper. The system would, in turn, present completely different artwork to that user such that that user would not know that, in fact, the same infrastructure lies beneath the two web sites. In this manner, the same set of programming and resources may be applied and

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packaged to serve different users in different markets thereby maximizing the utility of and revenues generated by the system.

The system can be customized in an almost unlimited number of ways. The newspaper's customers may be offered a limited number of art work choices, a limited number of templates and a limited number of list vendors while the advertising agency's customers could be offered many more choices in each category.

The foregoing description and drawings merely explain and illustrate the invention and the invention is not limited thereto except insofar as the appended claims are so limited, inasmuch as those skilled in the art, having the present disclosure before them will be able to make modifications and variations therein without departing from the scope of the invention.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**Claim -1 -**

A method for creating a custom designed direct mail advertisement and designating recipients thereof via the Internet, said method comprising:

- logging on to a web site via the Internet;
- selecting from among one or more pre-defined designs a design for the front side of a direct mail advertisement;
- selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement;
- specifying the text that appears on the back side of a direct mail advertisement;
- specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the direct mail advertisement;
- compiling the list of recipients for the direct mail advertisement corresponding to the specified criteria; and
- electronically transmitting data files comprising the design of the front and back sides of the direct mail advertisement and the list of recipients toward printing pre-addressed individual copies of the custom designed direct mail advertisement for subsequent mailing to the intended recipients thereof.

Claim -2-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement comprises the step of selecting from among one or more predefined templates.

Claim -3-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement comprises the step of selecting from among one or more templates uploaded by the user.

Claim -4-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the invention further includes the step of saving the completed template appearing on the back side of the direct mail advertisement for later recall.

Claim -5-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of selecting a design for the back side of a direct mail advertisement comprises the step of selecting from among one or more previously saved templates.

Claim -6-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of specifying the text that appears on the back side of a direct mail advertisement includes the step of

uploading user supplied artwork and logos for inclusion on the back side of the direct mail advertisement.

Claim -7-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of logging onto a web site via the internet further includes the step of identifying the user's profile and security rights toward filtering the list of recipients for the direct mail advertisement.

Claim -8-

The invention according to Claim 1 wherein the step of logging onto a web site via the internet further includes the step of identifying the URL used by the user.

Claim -9-

The invention according to Claim 8 wherein the invention further includes the step of providing to the user a web site having a visual appearance which is determined by which URL the user used to log onto the web site.

Claim -10-

The invention according to Claim 8 wherein the invention further includes the step of providing to the user a web site having content which is determined by which URL the user used to log onto the web site.

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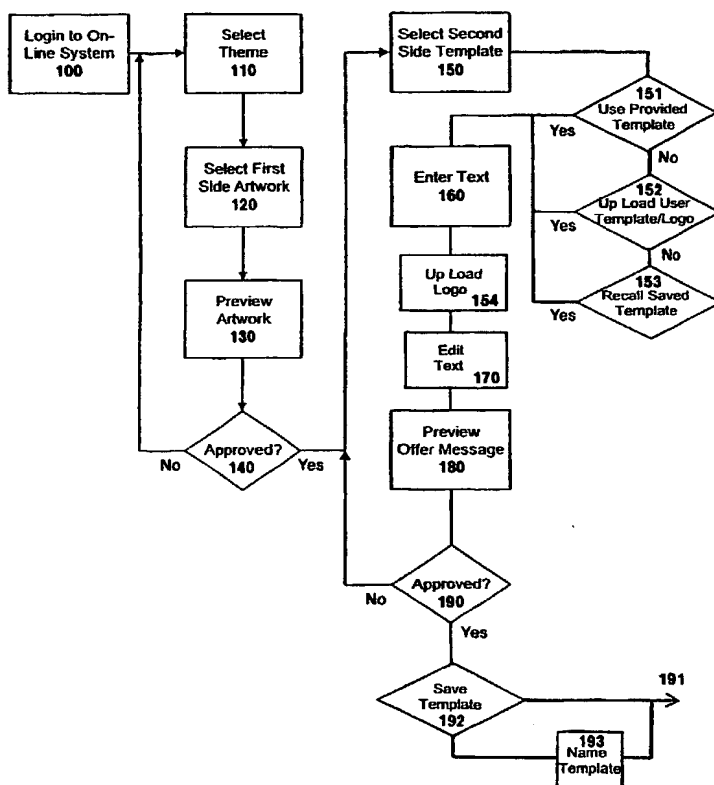
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- (71) Applicant and
(72) Inventor: **KARGMAN, James, B.** [US/US]; 2223 N. Burling, Chicago, IL 60614 (US).
- (74) Agents: **SILVERMAN, Howard, E.** et al.; The Law Offices of Dick and Harris, Suite 3800, 181 W. Madison Street, Chicago, IL 60602 (US).
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: AN ENHANCED SYSTEM FOR THE CREATION OF CUSTOM DESIGNED DIRECT MAIL ADVERTISING AND DESIGNATION OF RECIPIENTS THEREOF VIA THE INTERNET PROVIDING FOR USER SUPPLIER TEMPLATES



(57) Abstract: The present invention discloses a method for creating a custom designed direct mail advertisement and designating recipients thereof via the Internet and comprises the steps of: selecting from among one or more pre-defined designs (120) a design for the front side of the advertisement; selecting from among predefined or user uploaded templates (150) and logos (154), or previously saved templates, a design for the back side of the advertisements; specifying text (170) for the back side of the advertisement; specifying one or more criteria that define the intended recipient class for the advertisement; compiling the list of recipients for the advertisement corresponding to the specified criteria by searching a database for names and addresses that match the specified criteria; and transmitting the designed advertisement and list of intended recipients of same for printing pre-addressed individual copies of the designed direct mail advertisement and mailing thereof.

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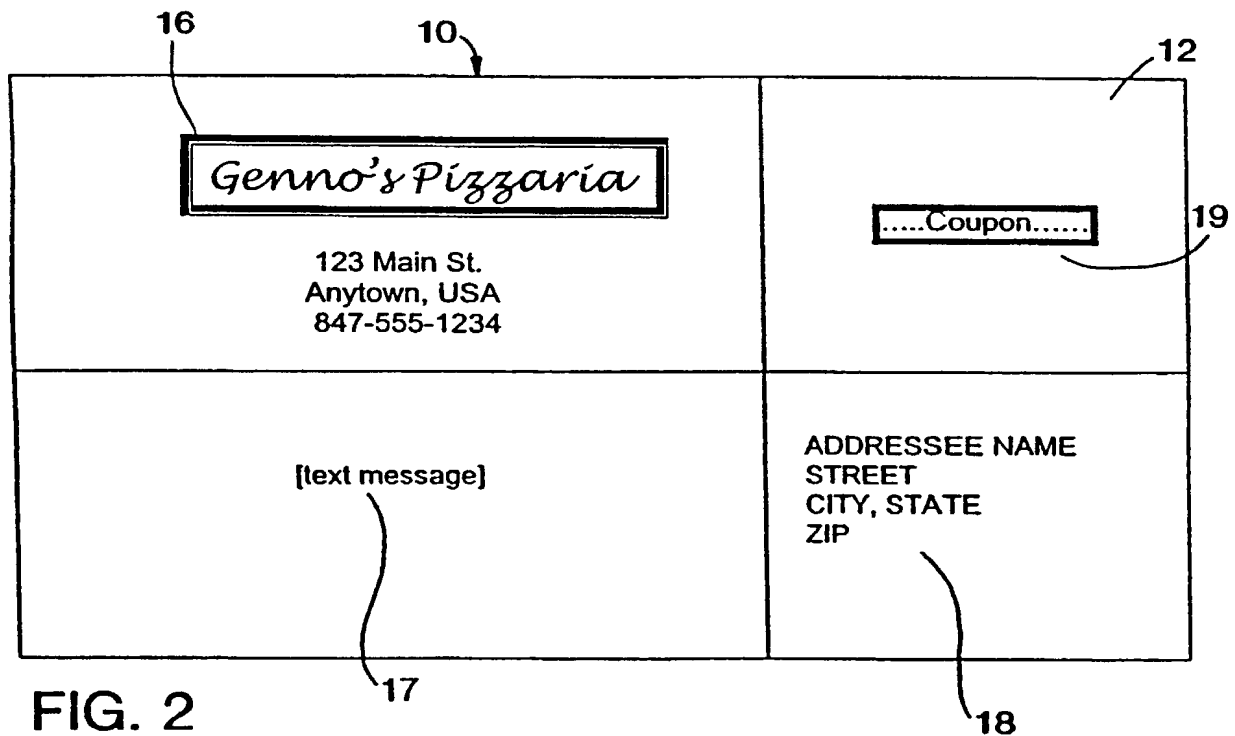
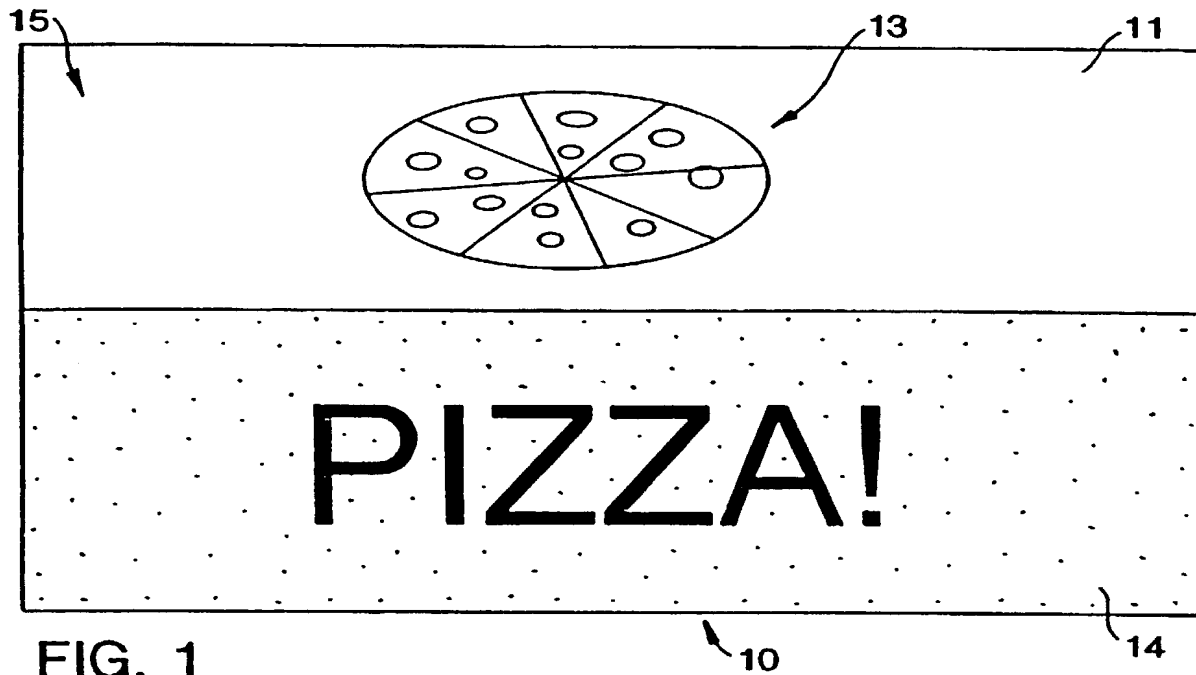
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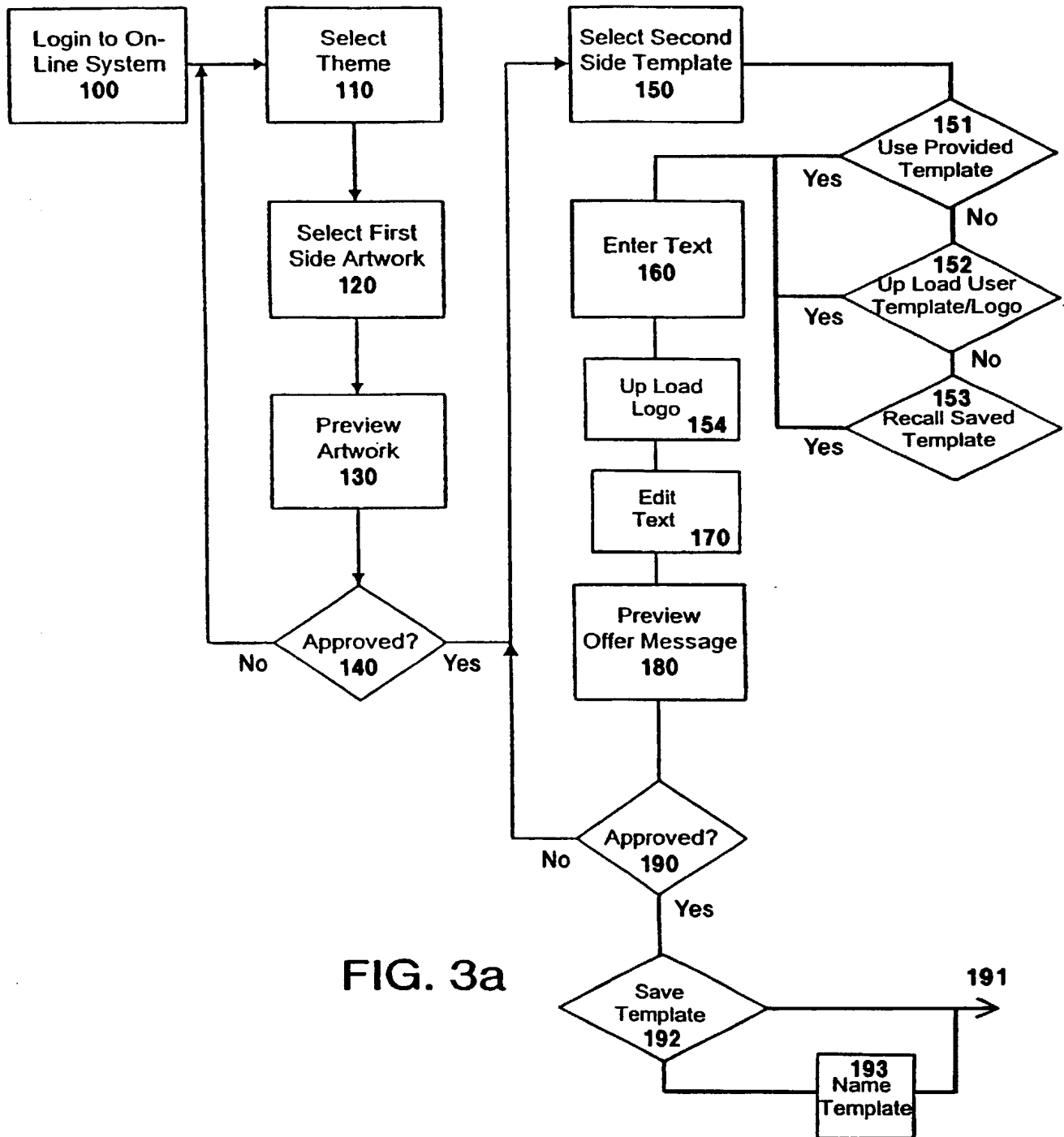


FIG. 3a

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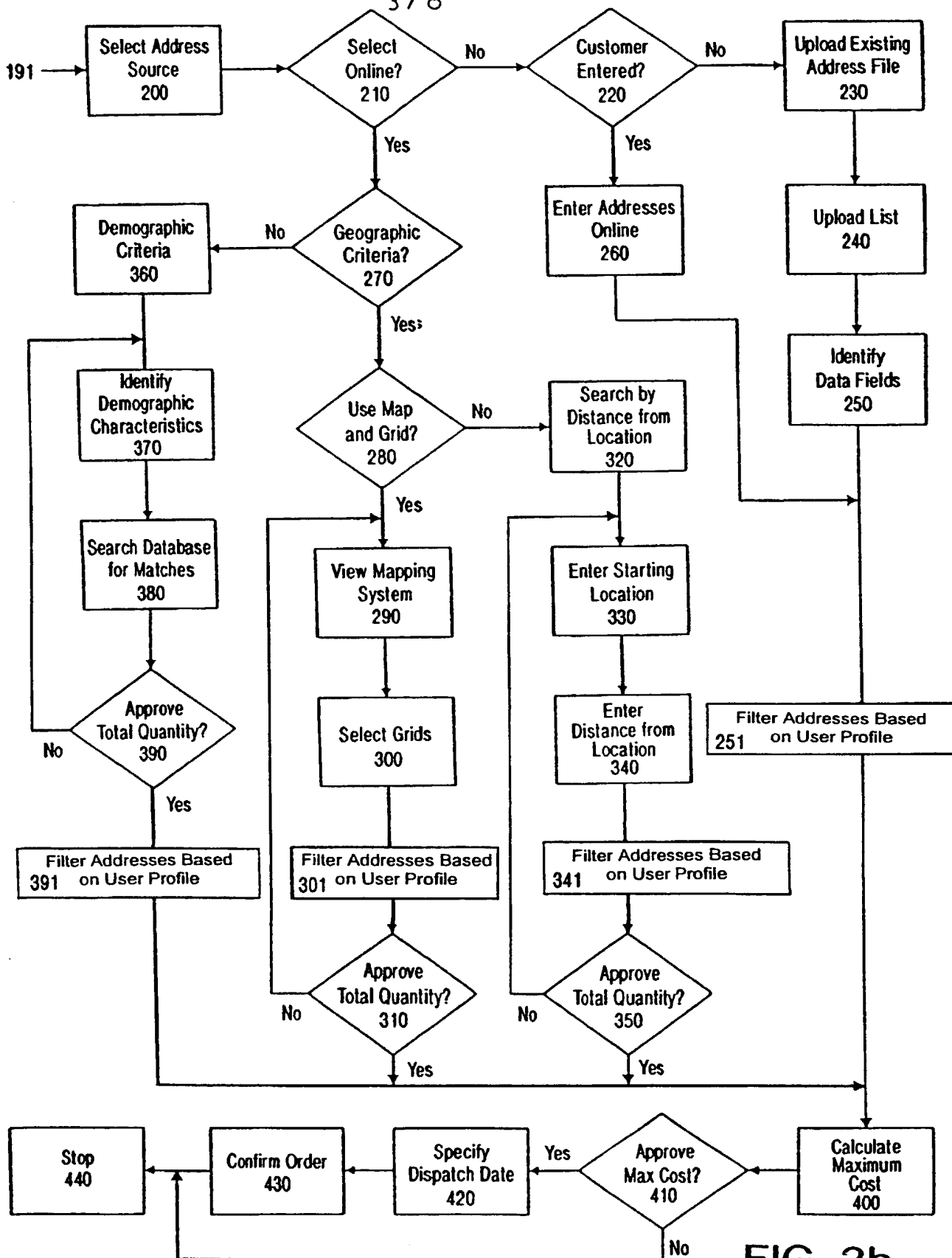


FIG. 3b

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CHOOSE A THEME

INSERT YOUR MESSAGE

SELECT/UPLOAD A LIST

HELP


PLEASE ENTER YOUR MESSAGE

Continue

Message Text

MAILER CHECKLIST	
THEME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MESSAGE	<input type="checkbox"/>
LIST	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="radio"/> RESET ALL	
<input type="radio"/> CHECKOUT	

Store Name Phone Number Address
Body Coupon #1: DollarsCoupon #1: CentsCoupon #1: ConditionsCoupon #1: ConditionsCoupon #1: SubheadCoupon #1: DisclaimerCoupon #2: DollarsCoupon #2: CentsCoupon #2: SubheadCoupon #2: DisclaimerArtwork Code **FIG. 4**

	Home	Create a Mailer!	Account Information	Contact Us	HELP
CHOOSE A THEME	INSERT YOUR MESSAGE		SELECT/UPLOAD A LIST		

GEENO'S PIZZARIA

847-555-1000

1234 West Main Street
Buffalo Springs

Geeno's Pizzaria has served the Buffalo Springs community since 1985. We offer dine-in, carryout and delivery service. Ask about our daily specials!

\$10 ⁹⁵

Plus Tax

Dine-in, carryout or delivery

16" THIN-CRUST PIZZA

Up to 2 Toppings
... Plus ...


One Free Liter of Soda

Offer expires 2/28/99.
Not valid with other offers.
Mention coupon when ordering, please.
One coupon per customer.

\$2 ⁰⁰ OFF

**ANY ORDER
OVER \$10.00**

Offer expires 2/28/99.
Not valid with other offers.
Mention coupon when ordering, please.
One coupon per customer.



Your Customer
1234 Main Street
Anytown, USA 60000

Sample Address
(For Position Only)


PPS RT. STO
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ZIP M

MAILER CHECKLIST	THEME <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MESSAGE <input type="checkbox"/>	LIST <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="O RESET ALL"/>	<input type="button" value="O CHECKOUT"/>
------------------	-------------------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

NATIONAL SYSTEMS CORPORATION

Click on Continue to approve the message content and layout. Use the browser Back button to go back and edit the message, template and artwork.

FIG. 5



Home
Create a Mailer!
Account Information
Contact Us

HELP

MAILER CHECKLIST

THEME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MESSAGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LIST	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="radio"/> RESET ALL	
<input type="radio"/> CHECKOUT	

CHOOSE A THEME
INSERT YOUR MESSAGE
SELECT/UPLOAD A LIST

LifeStyle Selector

Please Enter Criteria Details

Continue

Estimated Household Income

Lower: \$35,000-\$49,999 ▼ Lower: \$75,000-\$99,999 ▼

Estimated Household Income

Lower: 10-19 Units ▼ Upper: 10-19 Units ▼

Head of Household Age

☐ Use All

☒ 25-34

☐ 35-44

☐ <24

☐ 55-64


☐ 65+

☐ 45-54

Children Present Don't Care ☒ Yes: ☐ No: ☐

Continue

FIG. 6



Home
Create a Mailer!
Account Information
Contact Us

CHOOSE A THEME
INSERT YOUR MESSAGE
SELECT/UPLOAD A LIST
HELP

MAILER CHECKLIST
 THEME ☒
 MESSAGE ☒
 LIST ☒
☐ RESET ALL
☐ CHECKOUT

Select Delivery Areas
 Address:
 City:
 State: Zip:
New Address

Continue

Change Selection Criteria

Please wait - processing map

IN

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3/8

1/2

3/4

1

2

4

6

8

10

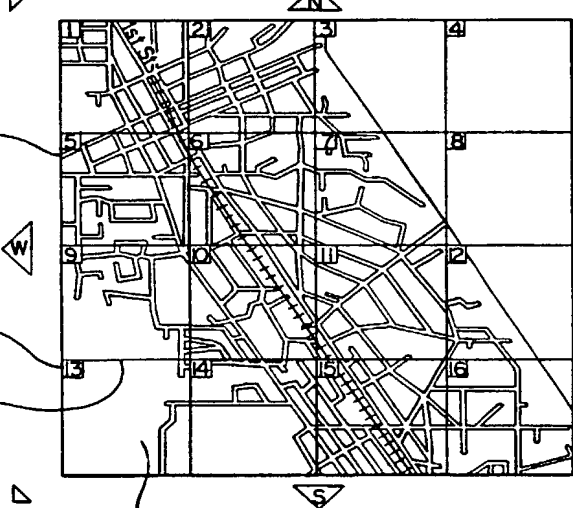
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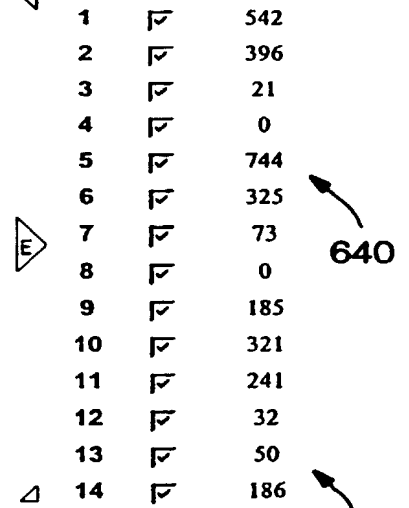
20

OUT

SEARCH RADIUS (MILES)

Check Box to Select		Addresses
Cell	Addresses=	
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	542
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	396
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0
5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	744
6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	325
7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	73
8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0
9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	185
10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	321
11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	241
12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	32
13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	50
14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	186
15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	448
16	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	155
Addresses=		3719





Continue

FIG. 7

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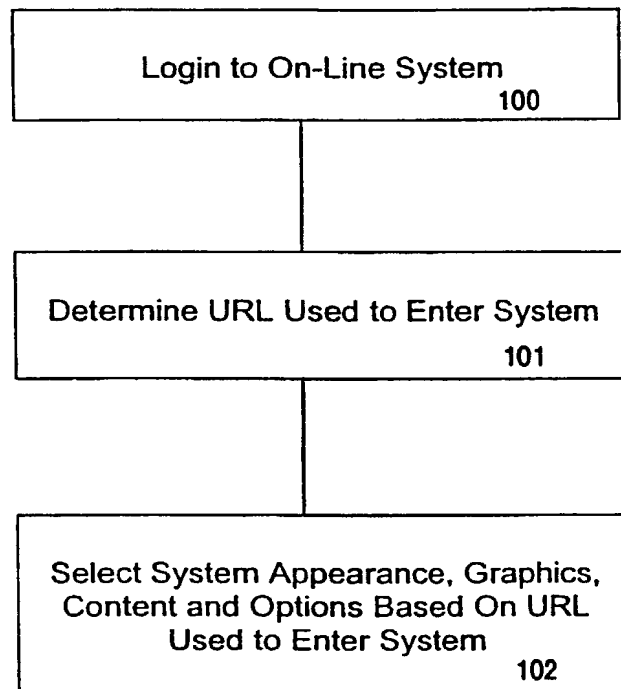


FIG. 8

Docket No.
991131

Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

English Language Declaration

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

**AN ENHANCED SYSTEM FOR THE CREATION OF CUSTOM DESIGNED DIRECT MAIL ADVERTISING
AND DESIGNATION OF RECIPIENTS THEREOF VIA THE INTERNET PROVIDING FOR USER
SUPPLIED TEMPLATES**

the specification of which

(check one)

☐ is attached hereto.

☒ was filed on February 19, 2002 as United States Application No. or PCT International

Application Number 10/049,963

and was amended on _____

(if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(a)-(d) or Section 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or Section 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority Not Claimed

PCT/US00/23454

PCT

25 August 2000

☐

(Number)

(Country)

(Day/Month/Year Filed)

☐

(Number)

(Country)

(Day/Month/Year Filed)

☐

(Number)

(Country)

(Day/Month/Year Filed)

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C.· Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

27 August 1999

(Filing Date)

(Filing Date)

(Filing Date)

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U. S. C. Section 120 of any United States application(s), or Section 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, C. F. R., Section 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application:

(Status)
(patented, pending, abandoned)

(Status)
(patented, pending, abandoned)

(Status)
(patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. (list name and registration number)

⑨
 Richard E. Dick 27778
 Richard D. Harris 27898
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